Colby Urges Other U.S. Agencies To Provide Cover for CIA Agents

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Former CIA director William Colby testified yesterday that the proposed new U.S. intelligence charter should require some federal agencies to give U.S. intelligence agents cover over seas.

"The present situation," Colby told the Senate Intelligence Committee, "is ridiculous and dangerous in the inclination of a number of government agencies to bar the use of their cover for intelligence operations approved by the Congress."

Colby said he believes the charter should provide some way for intelligence agents to act as employes of non-intelligence agencies abroad when necessary to cover their true intelligence activities.

Colby said the requirement should be attached to a provision already in the proposed new charter that would permit American reporters, clergy and professors to do work for U.S. intelligence agencies abroad.

Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) sparked a flurry when he testified that some of the articles in leading American newspapers about congressional intelligence hearings in 1975 were written by reporters who "had been on the payroll of the CIA or were on the payroll of the CIA."

But later, Weicker told reporters he did not know of any reporters who were on the CIA payroll at the time that they wrote the articles about the congressional hearings.

The Senate committee and the House Intelligence Committee are conducting hearings on a proposed new charter that would spell out what U.S. intelligence agencies can and cannot do in the future.